

From: [Streetsblog SF](#)
To: [O'Day, Kathleen \(DPW\)](#)
Subject: Streetsblog SF Morning Round-Up
Date: Friday, December 22, 2017 9:02:48 AM

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The latest streets and transportation news from Streetsblog SF

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- New Housing at 18th and Mission ([SFChron](#))
- More on Positive Train Control Safety System ([SFChron](#))
- 298 Lives Lost to Rail Safety System Delays ([EastBayTimes](#))
- Repeal the New Gas Tax? ([EastBayTimes](#), [KQED](#))

- Self-Driving Car vs. Motorcyclist Collision in SF ([Curbed](#))
- Short Reflections on the Salesforce Tower ([Curbed](#))
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- Marin-Sonoma Support Toll Hike ([MarinIJ](#))
- Riding BART as Life Lesson ([HuffPost](#))

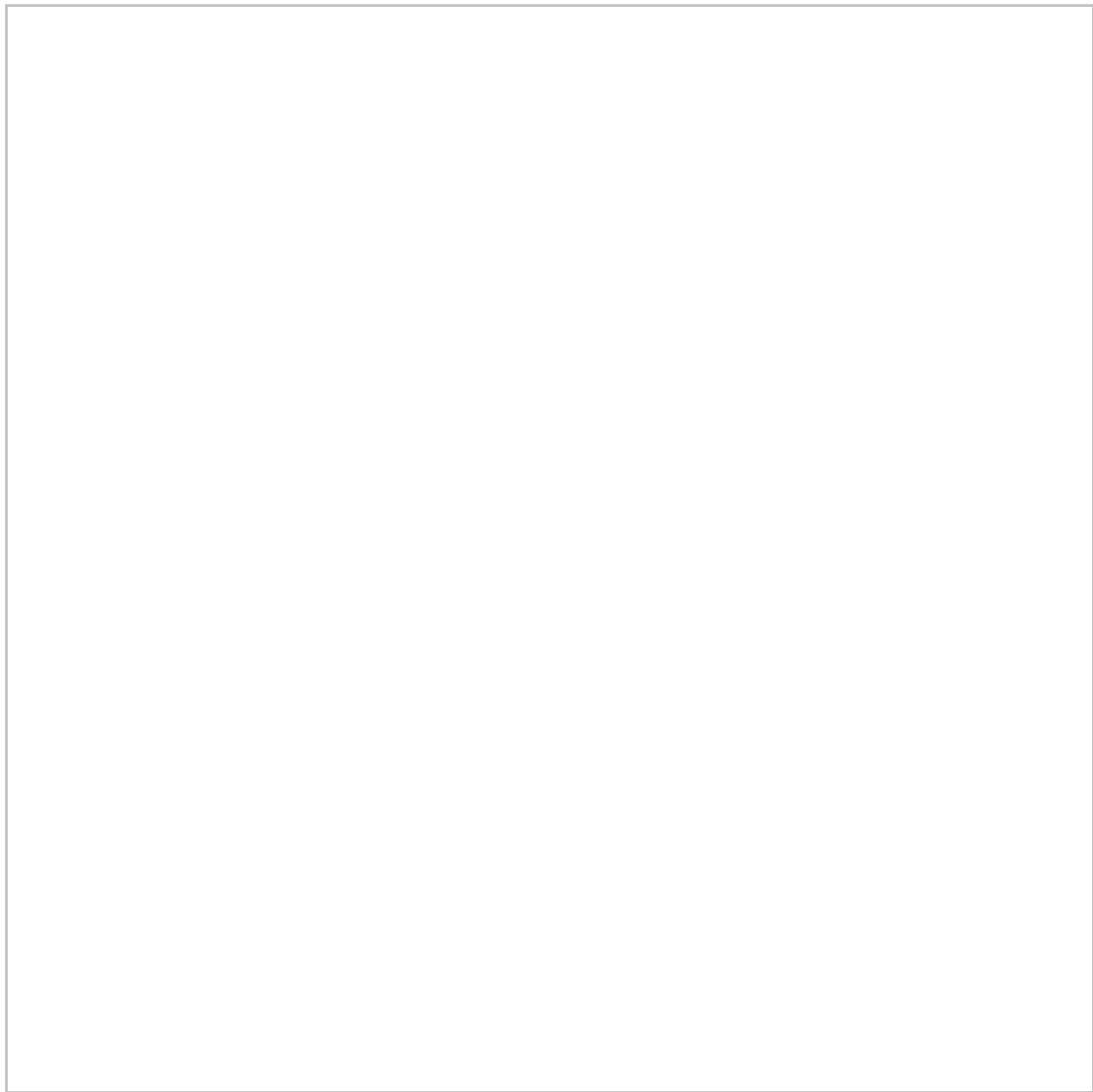
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Streetsblog SF will be taking a holiday break. See you in the New Year!

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[What's going on with SFMTA's 16th Street Transit Improvement Project?](#)



The \$67.5 million 16th Street improvement project, part of SFMTA's 'Muni Forward' plan to improve bus reliability and run times, is supposedly [on schedule and on budget](#). But there's decidedly little to see on the street.

"My understanding is they were supposed to stripe the transit-only lanes east of Potrero in November," wrote Rachel Hyden, Executive Director of the San Francisco Transit Riders. "I actually rode the 55 out to our [three weeks ago] holiday party and didn't notice them, so that's unfortunate."

There's a reason she didn't notice them (Streetsblog did a survey of the street late last week)—it's because they're not there.

Streetsblog reached out to SFMTA communications nearly a week ago to find out what's going on with the project and still has received no reply. However, through a source at SFMTA who spoke on condition of anonymity, it's clear that the transit lane should have been stripped this Fall, as Hyden believes.

On 16th street itself there is nothing to see except some flyers attached to utility poles announcing the project and a couple of easily missed transit-only signs buried in the visual noise, such as the one photographed below:

IMG_20171216_144006



Motorists could be forgiven for not noticing this sign, absent any other markings to indicate the right lanes are for public transit only. Photo: Streetsblog/Rudick

According to the [project web page](#) at SFMTA, the plan is to improve the “22 Fillmore route along 2.3 miles of 16th Street, including transit-only lanes, transit bulbs, new traffic and pedestrian signals, as well as new streetscape amenities.”



SFMTA's website still lists the project as "on time," when the early implementation phase is supposed to be finished—and clearly is not. Image: SFMTA

The project also shifts bicycle traffic to 17th street, to make way for the bus-only lanes. That has been done, but cyclists are pretty universally scornful of the new lanes. There are a few short segments of a plastic-bollard-protected bike lane, but only in the uphill direction for the four blocks between Potrero and Kansas. The protection drops in and out abruptly and oddly and, as seen in the photo below, spills cyclists back into a door-zone lane. It's hardly the kind of physically protected bike lane that qualifies as for "all ages and abilities."

IMG_20171215_122248



This type of dangerous, door-zone stripe that wedges cyclists between parked cars and moving traffic shouldn't even be in SFMTA's toolbox anymore, but that's how most of 17th's 'bike corridor' is 'designed.' Photo: Streetsblog/Rudick



One of the short segments of plastic-bollard protected bike lane on 17th. Not bad, but protection drops in and out and then abruptly disappears completely after only four blocks. And it's only on one side of the street. Photo: Streetsblog/Rudick

"The bike lanes were actually striped like a year ago. When I worked at MTA I heard a lot of complaints about the quality, or lack thereof," confirmed Hyden.

And cycling advocate Adam Long, who regularly commutes on 17th, is one of the people complaining...with little effect so far.

New unprotected bike lane on 17th St. is not working, [@sfmta_muni](#). It's encouraging double parking by creating a space for it. Please fix. pic.twitter.com/BdLRouBLd0

— Adam (@adaman797) [February 3, 2017](#)

Last July, in fact, Long witnessed (and [caught on his bike cam](#)) a collision near the intersection of Texas and 17th, when a parked car pulled out of a parking spot, crossed the bike lane without looking, and rammed into a passing car. “Good thing there was no cyclist in that unprotected bike lane because they would be in the hospital right now,” wrote Long in a tweet about the incident.

“Whether you’re talking about 16th and 17th, Illinois or the bridges from the north, the bike connections into Mission Bay are just not that great. It’s a relatively flat area with a level of development that warrants better planning for how people access the UCSF campus, the coming Warriors stadium and the neighborhood generally,” wrote Chris Cassidy, spokesman for the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition.

Under the late [Mayor Lee’s executive directive](#), SFMTA showed its ability to install reasonably good protected bike and bus infrastructure in a short amount of time—[sometimes to Streetblog’s pleasant surprise](#). What has been installed on 17th is dangerous and sub-standard. Streetsblog can only hope that the bike lanes on 17th will get improved and the early implementation work to make a decent transit lane on 16th will get on schedule—for real, instead of just on the SFMTA web page—come the new year.

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[Cast Your Vote for the Best Urban Street Transformation of 2017](#)



Streetsblog asked our readers to send in their nominations for [the best street redesigns of 2017](#), and they delivered this batch of six outstanding finalists.

Each of these six cities claimed a lot of space from cars to make streets work better for people. We've got two major transit-priority projects, three bike-friendly overhauls, and one downtown that prioritized pedestrians to create livelier public spaces. Before we settled on these finalists, we had to cut a few other worthy contenders, including [Pittsburgh's Liberty Avenue](#) bus lanes and [Nashville's Nolensville Pike and Welshville Drive](#) pedestrians improvements.

Take a look at your six nominees and vote below to decide which will be named the best street transformation of 2017.

[streetsie_2017](#)



Albuquerque: Central Avenue

[albuquerque-art-brt](#)

Albuquerque held a [kickoff ceremony](#) for this nine-mile bus rapid transit project late last month, after nearly a decade of planning and a lot of political jousting.

Bus riders on Albuquerque's main drag speed along in center-running transit lanes, with a fast boarding process thanks to off-board payment and sheltered waiting areas that are level with the floor of the bus. Frequent service will begin next year.

The city also revised its zoning code to support transit-oriented development along the line. Mayor Richard Berry, a Republican, lead the project through some heated political battles, including a pair of lawsuits, and ultimately succeeded.

Here's another shot from [the mayor](#):

ABQ ART



Central Avenue carries 42 percent of Albuquerque’s transit trips, about 15,000 daily. The hope is that this project will not only boost those numbers but provide the city with a walkable spine to guide future growth and development.

The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy awarded the busway design “Gold Level” status — the highest ever issued for an American BRT project.

Cleveland: Detroit-Superior Bridge

[cleveland_bridge_before_after](#)



We've been [hard on some of Cleveland's previous bike planning efforts](#). But this year, the city showed it can do bike infrastructure well. Cleveland converted a whole outer lane of its Detroit Superior Bridge — which was a nightmare for cyclists — into a bright green protected bike lane.

The project was collaborative, including significant help from the regional planning agency, NOACA, as well as Ohio DOT. It demonstrates a clear evolution at all three agencies.

Bike Cleveland says that prior to this project, the bridge was consistently reported to be one of the most dangerous places to bike in the city. The bridge still has some drawbacks — only one side is protected, and it still deposits cyclists into some extremely intimidating intersections. But those locations will eventually include bike signals — another Cleveland first.

Toronto: King Street

[king_st_before_after](#)



Photos via [Jennifer Keesmat](#)

We can't give Toronto enough credit for showing how simple it can be to improve transit service with its [King Street](#) project. The trick is to get cars out of the way.

The one-year pilot project made King Street, with its 65,000 streetcar trips, a much faster street for transit by limiting cars to local access only.

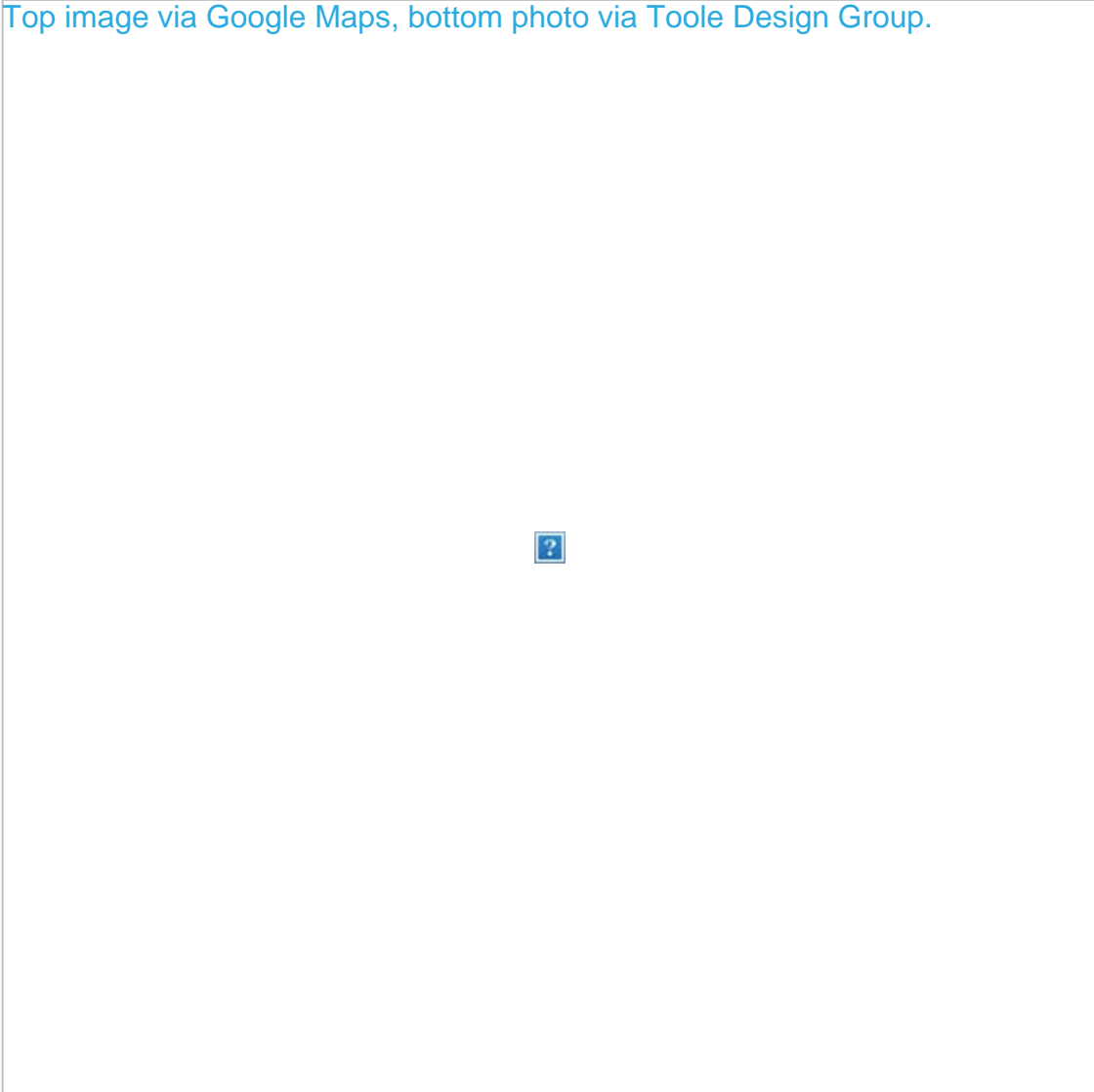
Using inexpensive low-cost materials, the city was able to dramatically improve streetcar travel times for only \$1.5 million.

Streetcar trips were maddeningly slow when transit riders were bogged down in private car traffic. But when the pilot launched a few weeks ago, it [immediately](#) shaved five to 13 minutes off streetcar journeys along the 1.6-mile stretch. The reception from riders has been [overwhelmingly positive](#), and the

Toronto Star has already [insisted](#) the changes should be made permanent.

St. Paul: Jackson Street

Top image via [Google Maps](#), bottom photo via [Toole Design Group](#).



Top image via Google Maps, bottom photo via Toole Design Group.

St. Paul built this sidewalk-level, all-ages bike path through its downtown on Jackson Street. It goes right past the Minnesota state capitol.

The nine-block path is part of St. Paul's Capital City Bikeway, a system of on-street bike lanes that connect to off-street trails. The [\\$16.5 million](#) project involved significant construction, including utility relocation.

Austin: 3rd Street

Austin_3rd_street



Austin completed another inspiring bike project on 3rd Street. The red bike lane is protected by curbs and parking.

This project is the final link in a contiguous, five-mile “all ages” bike route through downtown Austin. It’s the type of street improvement that has helped Austin make [tremendous progress](#) in improving bike safety over the last few years.

Halifax: Argyle and Grafton

Photos: City of Halifax



Photos: City of Halifax

Halifax, Nova Scotia, made the final with the transformation of two downtown commercial streets into streets that prioritize pedestrians over motor vehicles. These blocks now have no curbs, improving accessibility and allowing people to use the entirety of the street. Motor vehicles are allowed, but drivers have to go carefully and proceed at a walking pace.

This is a crowded downtown commercial area, and the new freedom of movement for people on foot should make it even more of a draw. An [explanatory video](#) from the city, however, does say that pedestrians are still expected to yield to drivers.

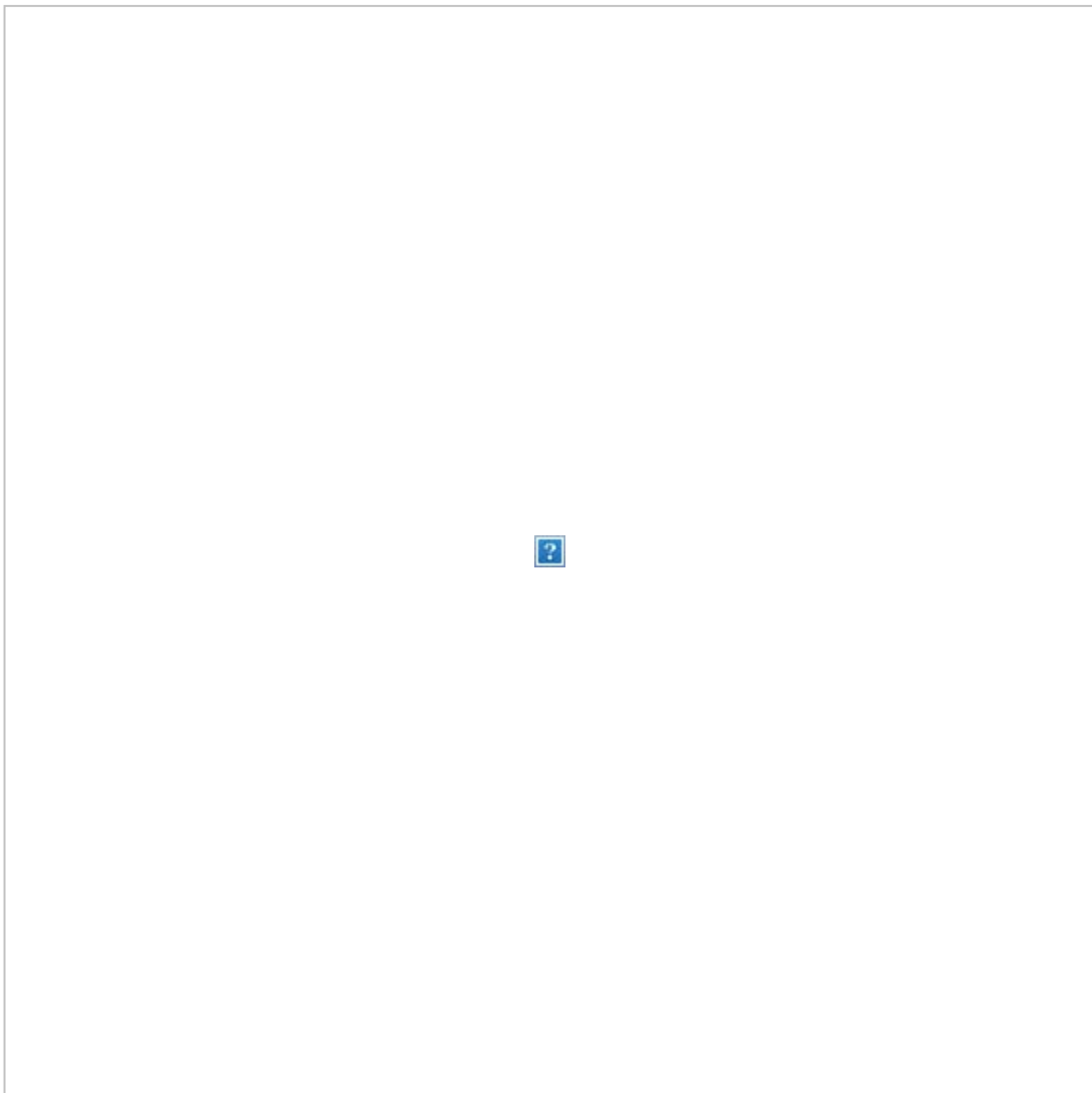
The project involved a complete resurfacing with “argyle” stones. All on-street parking was removed to give businesses bigger patio spaces. The streets operate as a public plaza.

Which project deserves the Streetsie? Cast your vote below — the polls are open until December 26.

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[Talking Headways Podcast: Vive La Transportation Révolution](#)



This week we return to the NACTO Designing Cities conference to hear from Paris Deputy Mayor of Transportation and Public Space [Christophe Najdovski](#).

Najdovski discusses the stunning array of improvements to transit and streets currently underway in Paris: expanding the subway and tram networks, better cycling infrastructure, and more car-free streets and public spaces, including the pedestrianization of roadways along the Seine.

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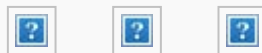
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